

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

60,130-1909; 03MRA0457

IN THE CLAIMS

1.-27. (Cancelled)

28. (Currently Amended) An axle assembly comprising:

an axle housing;

an axle to be driven by a drive input including a yoke for receiving a drive force, and rotating a shaft about a drive axis;

a seal assembly mounted between said axle housing and said yoke, said seal assembly including a rotating portion comprising a running sleeve segment located on said shaft and extending along said drive axis, and a fixed portion having a seal mounting segment, with a seal mounted to said seal mounting segment, said seal being in contact with said running sleeve segment, and a slinger end on ~~one of said rotating portion and said fixed portion~~, said slinger end extending radially outwardly beyond said seal, ~~said slinger end extending in a direction having a component parallel to said drive axis, and a component perpendicular to said drive axis such that said slinger end extends at an angle relative to said drive axis, and said slinger end extending radially outwardly beyond a portion of said axle housing that receives said fixed portion, and a slinger extension on the other of said rotating portion and said fixed portion, said slinger extension also extending radially outwardly beyond said seal, said slinger extension also extending in a direction having a component parallel to said drive axis, and a component perpendicular to said drive axis such that said slinger extension extends at an angle relative to said drive axis, and wherein one of said slinger extension 26b and said slinger end is spaced toward said yoke relative to the other of said slinger extension and said slinger end, with said one of said slinger extension and said slinger end extending radially outwardly beyond the other of said slinger extension and said slinger end.~~

29. (Currently Amended) The axle assembly as set forth in claim 28, wherein a second seal assembly is mounted at a rearward portion of said axle housing, with a second shaft driving a

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

60,130-1909; 03MRA0457

second yoke, and ~~said a~~ second seal assembly being mounted between said axle housing and said second yoke, said second seal assembly also including a rotating portion comprising a running sleeve segment located on said second shaft and extending along a drive axis of said second shaft, and a fixed portion having a seal mounting segment, with a seal mounted to said seal mounting segment, said seal being in contact with said running sleeve segment, and a slinger end on ~~one of said rotating portion and said fixed portion~~, said slinger end extending radially outwardly beyond said seal, said slinger end extending in a direction having a component parallel to said drive axis, and a component perpendicular to said drive axis such that said slinger end extends at an angle relative to said drive axis, and said slinger end extending radially outwardly beyond a portion of said axle housing that receives said fixed portion, and a slinger extension on ~~the other of said rotating portion and said fixed portion~~, said slinger extension also extending radially outwardly beyond said seal, said slinger extension also extending in a direction having a ~~component parallel to said drive axis, and a component perpendicular to said drive axis such that~~ said slinger extension extends at an angle relative to said drive axis, and wherein ~~one of said slinger extension and said slinger end~~ of said second seal assembly is spaced away from said second yoke relative to ~~the other of said slinger extension and said slinger end~~, with said ~~one of said slinger extension and said slinger end~~ extending radially outwardly beyond ~~the other of said slinger extension and said slinger end~~.

30. (New) The axle assembly as set forth in claim 28, wherein said rotating portion has a portion curving away from said yoke, and which is radially outwardly of said seal, and in contact with at least a portion of said seal, said portion of said rotating portion then curving back outwardly and merging into said slinger end.

31. (New) A seal assembly comprising:

a rotating portion comprising a running sleeve segment to be located on a shaft and extending along a drive axis, and a fixed portion having a seal mounting segment, with a seal

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

60,130-1909; 03MRA0457

mounted to said seal mounting segment, said seal being in contact with said running sleeve segment, and a slinger end on said rotating portion, said slinger end extending radially outwardly beyond said seal, said slinger end extending in a direction having a component parallel to the drive axis, and a component perpendicular to the drive axis such that said slinger end extends at an angle relative to the drive axis, and said slinger end extending radially outwardly beyond a portion of an axle housing that will receive said fixed portion, and a slinger extension on said fixed portion, said slinger extension also extending radially outwardly beyond said seal, said slinger extension also extending in a direction having a component parallel to the drive axis, and a component perpendicular to the drive axis such that said slinger extension extends at an angle relative to said drive axis, and wherein said slinger end is spaced away from said seal relative to said slinger extension, with said slinger end extending radially outwardly beyond said slinger extension.

32. (New) The seal assembly as set forth in claim 31, wherein said rotating portion has a portion curving towards said seal, and which is radially outwardly of said seal, and in contact with at least a portion of said seal, said portion of said rotating portion then curving back outwardly and merging into said slinger end.